



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
GEORGE P. BUSH, COMMISSIONER

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STATEMENT

George P. Bush commends Senate hearing on modernization of the Endangered Species Act

Hearing to examine ways to improve efficacy and minimize abuses

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AUSTIN - Today Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush praised Chairman John Barrasso and the members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works for holding a hearing entitled "Oversight: Modernization of the Endangered Species Act." Here is the statement by Commissioner Bush:

"I commend Chairman John Barrasso and the members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works for holding a hearing on how to improve effectiveness and prevent the potential for abuse of the Endangered Species Act. The ongoing efficacy of regulations and legislation should be continuously monitored, especially ones with far-reaching and severe impacts such as the Endangered Species Act.

"Abuses such as 'sue and settle' are costly to taxpayers and minimize the effectiveness of the intended purpose of this law, which is to focus on protecting those species that need federal intervention to survive. The Endangered Species Act was designed to preserve biodiversity, not enrich trial lawyers and political activists."

In August of 2015, Commissioner Bush joined forces with land commissioners from Wisconsin to Hawaii to stop environmentalists from taking advantage of American taxpayers. The Western States Land Commissioners Association, or WSLCA, unanimously approved a resolution, brought to the meeting by Commissioner Bush, which calls out "sue and settle" and called on Congress to reform the Endangered Species Act to end the questionable practice. The resolution also called on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service to take local and state data on wildlife into account before listing a species as endangered.

Sue and Settle

Under a little reported provision of the Endangered Species Act, environmental groups sue the federal government to get a species on the endangered list. The government often settles the lawsuits, and then pays the groups' legal expenses. The result of this arrangement is that species get listed as endangered with little to no scientific data to justify it, and the green groups rake in more green in the form of taxpayer dollars. "Sue and settle" has also led to a flood of litigation, with some 120 species currently under

review. The green groups' tactic, known as "sue and settle," lines environmental groups' pockets by looting the national treasury.

For more background information on the lawsuit filed by the General Land Office <http://www.glo.texas.gov/the-glo/news/press-releases/2015/august/commissioner-bush-leads-23-state-effort-to-end-green-sue-and-settle-racket.html>.

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